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**WOMAN SUFFRAGE A FAILURE.**

One of the enfranchised women citizens of the state of Colorado says that she has carefully observed the workings of woman suffrage in that state during the last few years and now removes all doubt as to her conclusions by boldly declaring that woman suffrage is a failure. She says she started with the conviction that woman suffrage would be a panacea for all of the wrongs from which women suffer and that she has carefully studied the workings of the law in Colorado as bearing upon her ideal.

Her conclusions are given in an exhaustive magazine article, in which she sums up the results of her "eagle-eyed" observations and the wearisome hours of study in this declaration:

"However suffrage may be regarded as an abstract problem, it has brought grave disaster upon the women of Colorado."

This broad statement is given as though it were a fact incapable of contradiction, but a more careful reading of it discloses that the expression is only the opinion of the writer, says the Seattle Times.

Then follows another emphatic conclusion: "The possession of the ballot and the employment of that possession has hurt the woman of Colorado as woman can least afford to be hurt. Her ideals have been lowered, the delicacy of her perception of right and wrong has been dulled."

If this conclusion be correct, it becomes a serious indictment against woman suffrage, but it is hardly safe for the careful student to accept the conclusion without previously knowing the gist of the evidence that must necessarily precede. The writer shows that she was expecting too much from woman suffrage at the inauguration of the experiment. Undoubtedly she has been disappointed; most people are when they have their ideals set too high.

Woman's work in almost any field of activity is beneficial—albeit she comes a long way short of creating perfect conditions. When she starts out with the assumption that the ballot in woman's hands will enable her to inaugurate the "millennium," the phlegmatic world will attach very little disappointment that must follow.

In shifting the testimony of the Colorado woman who is sorry that she ever voted, there is little that will justify even an amateur logician in accepting her conclusion, unless he starts out under the incubus of the "wish being father to the thought." If that be the conclusion he desires to reach, rather than a just one, of course he must not be too critical as to methods.

It is said that the women of Colorado are inclined to be "hysterical" in politics—that "the simplest discussion of the most trivial matter is marked by a breathless tenseness out of all conceivable proportion to the occasion." The result of this psychologic peculiarity of the sex is that "women regarded as leaders devoted themselves to creating excitement, in the belief that by so doing they are benefitting the state."

This is interesting testimony, but accepting it to be a true statement of the Colorado situation, and reasoning by induction that it would be the same in other states, it is not sufficient proof to draw the general conclusion that suffrage which has "brought grave disaster upon the women of Colorado" has also brought disaster in general.

If the testimony here given be true, it only demonstrates that when women go into politics they throw that same earnestness into the situation that they do in whatever else they undertake. Women may be more earnest than is necessary, possibly waste a good deal of nervous energy over trivial matters, and the fact that they do throw a little en-

thusiasm into a campaign may have a beneficial effect because of the indifference to the public welfare so often manifest by the male politician.

**MORE RAILROAD ACCIDENTS.**

Comparison with the figures of the present year with those of the year before show that there has been an increase of railroad accidents. As an example, there have been more than a thousand more collisions, and nearly a thousand more employees killed. The number of passengers killed has been about the same. There has been occasioned in money a gross loss of twenty millions of dollars during 1903.

The authority that tabulates the statistics, says the Ledger, makes no attempt to analyze them. In the state of perfection reached by railroads in relation to signals, it thinks, collisions ought to have been abolished. It cannot be regarded as having excuse. There is not the slightest occasion of putting to test the matter of the ability of two trains to pass each other on the same track. They can't do it. The desire for speed has resulted in cutting down the schedule, but it should have increased caution. Roadbeds are better than they once were, and rolling stock is in every way superior. Yet the accidents continue, and often the public reads with concern of some dire calamity.

Human judgment will fail. Orders will be wrongly written or wrongly read. It is wise that the control of trains should be as largely as possible mechanical. The block system is more reliable than the red lantern of the station agent. The men who look after trains are as a rule men to be trusted. They must have clear intelligence and a full realization of the responsibility that rests upon them. One of the largest railroads in the country has issued instructions that its train men must be total abstainers. They are not allowed to drink when off duty, but they must let intoxicating liquors alone. In this circumstance there will be more of an influence for the promotion of temperance than in all the tracts ever printed or lectures delivered. It would be unfair to say that the accidents that have occurred have been due to inebriation, and yet the possible danger has been recognized. By such practical reforms, temperance is coming into fashion. Men cannot be drunk and attend to the serious business of running trains, nor can they be in this condition and attend properly to business of any sort.

Flanges will break, rails spread, connecting rods break loose, axles suddenly snap; there are many accidents that cannot be prevented. But there can be the exercise of greater care. The railroads of this country could better devote the lost twenty millions to betterments.

Switzerland is a country in which very little drunkenness is to be observed, for the good and sufficient reason that the police arrest on the spot every person who shows the least sign of intoxication. There is, nevertheless, a large amount of secret drinking, and especially in French Switzerland absinthe has of late increased in use till its ravages are very noticeable. The government recognizes the drink problem as a most serious one, and is doing all it can to find means for its control. One of its recent investigations concerns the death rate from alcoholism. Statistics of this nature are usually inaccurate, for the reason that it is often impossible to find out just to what extent a deceased person has been given to the use of liquors. The facts thus collected show that among males over 20 years of age the death from delirium tremens average half of one per cent. This is ten times the rate officially recorded in France by the old and imperfect statistical methods. For males over 70 years of age alcohol is given as the principal or concomitant cause of death in 10 per cent of the cases. The general death rate directly referable to acute or chronic alcoholism, without including hepatic cirrhosis or other subsidiary conditions, is 3 per cent. This showing must admittedly be regarded as an alarming one, and as sufficient justification of the most strenuous efforts in the cause of temperance.

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The Salem Statesman regards it as rather a risky proposition to repeal the present tax law and rely on the mere act of repeal to reinstate the old one. This might technically follow, it says, and then "it wouldn't." It is rather a fine point to make and may be correct, but there are so many quirks and quips in the sinuous road the average legislative enactment is obliged to travel the moment it starts on its journey through the courts that the

safest way, since the legislative machinery will be in motion, anyhow, will be to bodily, and in so many words, reenact the old law and be done with it. Or some other, though it is the opinion hereabouts that the old law, itself a new one, was good enough and had given greater satisfaction than any other tax law the state had ever had. But the legislature had better actually and affirmatively enact something and not invite the risk of another special session, called, perhaps, just in time to interfere with the proper celebration of Washington's birthday.

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11:35 a m		4:00 p m
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